

**Collaboration in Higher Education – A Winner in the North Country**  
**Stephen Reno, Chancellor of the University System of New Hampshire,**  
**and William Simonton, Commissioner of the New Hampshire Community Technical**  
**College System**

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Choice, convenience, and quality, are three words that resonate among college-bound students today. Regardless of their age, students want to choose courses that reflect their interests or career plans. They want convenience in terms of having classrooms and services under one roof, as well as the opportunity to take courses on line. And they want programs of quality that will prepare them for a rewarding future. Collaboration between institutions of higher education should lead to greater choice, convenience, and quality, and New Hampshire's two public higher education systems have that clearly in mind here in the North Country.

The University System of New Hampshire (USNH) and the New Hampshire Community Technical College System (NHCTCS) signed an agreement on December 13, 2005 enabling us to offer programs and courses in single locations in Berlin and Littleton so we can take maximum advantage of our two systems' collective resources. By January 1, 2006, Granite State College – a component of USNH – will co-locate its Gorham/Berlin Center, including its staff, programs, and services, to the NHCTC Berlin Campus. The Granite State College Littleton Center already has co-located with the NHCTC Littleton Academic Center.

This agreement represents much more than the sharing of space. We took a thorough look at what was being offered at each institution in terms of courses and services, what we could do to simplify a student's transfer to Granite State College to work towards a bachelor's degree after earning an associate degree at NHCTC, and how we could better use our combined resources. The Memorandum of Understanding stipulates that NHCTC-Berlin and GSC staff meet regularly to review course offerings and look into ways to enhance this collaboration further.

Nationally, today's college student has more choices both in terms of how and where to pursue a degree. Almost any course can be found online. In addition, so-called "hybrid courses," in which an individual travels to a learning center for a portion of the curriculum, are becoming more popular. And increasingly, it is common for colleges to offer classes and degree programs at local businesses that have a need to train individuals in a particular subject. By combining our resources, our two systems can create efficiencies, offer expanded course and delivery options that reflect the needs of the region, and improve what we offer and how we deliver it.

To demonstrate our commitment to collaboration, the chairpersons of both Boards of Trustees, Paul Holloway and Andy Lietz, met at Berlin and were joined by the presidents

of NHCTC-Berlin and Granite State College and other representatives, to celebrate the signing of a memorandum of understanding. Our Boards understand the importance of collaboration between the two systems and we believe that the dialogue we have established will lead to similar additional efforts across New Hampshire. Our presidents at Granite State College and NHCTC-Berlin, Karol LaCroix and Kathy Eneguess, worked diligently to make this partnership a reality in the North Country. The winners of this new level of collaboration will be our students. Now they will have choice and convenience, without compromise of quality.